



# House of Representatives

General Assembly

**File No. 770**

*January Session, 2011*

Substitute House Bill No. 6585

*House of Representatives, May 5, 2011*

The Committee on Appropriations reported through REP. WALKER of the 93rd Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the House, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

## ***AN ACT CONCERNING THE HIGH SCHOOL DROPOUT AGE AND NOTIFICATION OF FAILING STUDENTS.***

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Section 10-184 of the general statutes is repealed and the  
2 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2011*):

3 All parents and those who have the care of children shall bring them  
4 up in some lawful and honest employment and instruct them or cause  
5 them to be instructed in reading, writing, spelling, English grammar,  
6 geography, arithmetic and United States history and in citizenship,  
7 including a study of the town, state and federal governments. Subject  
8 to the provisions of this section and section 10-15c, each parent or other  
9 person having control of a child five years of age and over and under  
10 eighteen years of age shall cause such child to attend a public school  
11 regularly during the hours and terms the public school in the district in  
12 which such child resides is in session, unless such child is a high school  
13 graduate or the parent or person having control of such child is able to  
14 show that the child is elsewhere receiving equivalent instruction in the

15 studies taught in the public schools. [For the school year commencing  
16 July 1, 2011, and each school year thereafter, the parent or person  
17 having control of a child seventeen years of age may consent, as  
18 provided in this section, to such child's withdrawal from school. Such  
19 parent or person shall personally appear at the school district office  
20 and sign a withdrawal form. Such withdrawal form shall include an  
21 attestation from a guidance counselor or school administrator of the  
22 school that such school district has provided such parent or person  
23 with information on the educational options available in the school  
24 system and in the community.] The parent or person having control of  
25 a child five years of age shall have the option of not sending the child  
26 to school until the child is six years of age and the parent or person  
27 having control of a child six years of age shall have the option of not  
28 sending the child to school until the child is seven years of age. The  
29 parent or person shall exercise such option by personally appearing at  
30 the school district office and signing an option form. The school district  
31 shall provide the parent or person with information on the educational  
32 opportunities available in the school system.

33 Sec. 2. Subsection (a) of section 10-223a of the general statutes is  
34 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective*  
35 *July 1, 2011*):

36 (a) On or before July 1, 2000, each local and regional board of  
37 education shall review and revise its policies for promotion from grade  
38 to grade and for graduation in order to ensure that such policies foster  
39 student achievement, reduce the incidence of social promotion and  
40 meet the requirements of this section. On and after said date, such  
41 policies shall: (1) Include objective criteria for the promotion and  
42 graduation of students, (2) provide for the measuring of the progress  
43 of students against such criteria and the reporting of such information  
44 to parents and students, (3) include alternatives to promotion such as  
45 transition programs, [and] (4) provide for supplemental services, and  
46 such policies may require students who have substantial academic  
47 deficiencies that jeopardize their eligibility for promotion or  
48 graduation to attend after school programs, summer school or other

49 programs offered by the school district that are designed to assist  
50 students in remedying such deficiencies, and (5) require the principal  
51 of a school to notify, in writing or electronically, the parent or guardian  
52 of a student in grades six to twelve, inclusive, enrolled at such school  
53 that such student is in danger of failing a course or courses at the  
54 middle of the marking period for the school or at least six weeks before  
55 the grade for such course or courses is finalized, whichever occurs  
56 sooner.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:

Section 1	July 1, 2011	10-184
Sec. 2	July 1, 2011	10-223a(a)

**ED** Joint Favorable Subst. C/R

APP

**APP** Joint Favorable

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

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**OFA Fiscal Note**

**State Impact:** None

**Municipal Impact:**

<b>Municipalities</b>	<b>Effect</b>	<b>FY 12 \$</b>	<b>FY 13 \$</b>
Local and Regional School Districts	STATE MANDATE - Cost	Minimal	Minimal

**Explanation**

The bill results in an additional minimal cost to local and regional school districts and imposes a new state mandate. The bill makes two changes (1) it eliminates a provision that would allow seventeen year olds to drop out of school with parental consent and (2) requires a principal to notify the parent or guardian of a student (in grades six through twelve) that the student is in danger of failing a course at the middle of the marking period or at least six weeks before the grade is final.

**DROPOUTS**

It is estimated that approximately 3% of all dropouts nationwide are attributed to seventeen year olds<sup>1</sup>. To the extent that local and regional school districts establish school budgets based on the assumption that a certain percentage of a class dropout each year, this could result in an additional minimal cost and state mandate in FY 12 as they could potentially face an increase in the number of full-time, enrolled students. Concurrently, beginning in FY 12, if local and regional school districts have more students enrolled this could impact funding

associated with the ECS grant. However, since ECS grants are capped for FY 12 and FY 13 (as contained in SB 1239, the biennial budget, passed by the Senate and the House), there is no anticipated state impact until FY 14.

Beginning in FY 14, the State Department of Education (SDE) could incur an increased cost associated with the ECS grant. ECS funding is based on three major components: the statutorily set foundation level of spending, the aid ratio (wealth measure), and the number of students. Changing the dropout age will increase the aid ratio as well as the number of students, which will increase total ECS spending. ECS grant calculations are based on previous year enrollment data.

#### FAILING A COURSE

Requiring a principal to notify parents of a failing student will result in a state mandate and a minimal cost of less than \$1,000 per district. It is anticipated that several districts will require resources of less than \$1,000 to meet the additional requirements, and many districts may not require any additional resources, as they are already following these guidelines, or would be able to issue notices electronically.

#### ***The Out Years***

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to the number of students who drop out and inflation. SDE could incur an increased cost beginning in FY 14 due to changing the dropout age and thereby increasing ECS spending.

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<sup>1</sup> According to census data, approximately 3% of all dropouts in 2008 were attributed to 17 year olds.

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**OLR Bill Analysis****sHB 6585*****AN ACT CONCERNING THE HIGH SCHOOL DROPOUT AGE AND NOTIFICATION OF FAILING STUDENTS.*****SUMMARY:**

This bill eliminates an option, currently scheduled to take effect July 1, 2011, for a student to drop out of school at age 17 with his or her parent's or guardian's consent. Thus, it makes permanent the current requirement that a student remain in school until he or she graduates from high school or turns age 18, whichever comes first.

The bill also requires boards of education to include in their required promotion and graduation policies a requirement that, if by the middle of a marking period or at least six weeks before grades are finalized, whichever occurs first, a student in grades six to 12 is in danger of failing one or more courses, the school principal notify the student's parent or guardian. The principal must notify the parent or guardian "in writing or electronically." Since emails and similar electronic communications are written, it appears that, under the bill, a principal could also notify parents verbally by telephone but not in person.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2011

**SCHOOL DROPOUT AGE**

Under current law, until July 1, 2011, students must stay in school until graduation or age 18. But starting July 1, 2011, a student may drop out at age 17 if his parent or guardian personally appears at the school district office and signs the withdrawal form. The school guidance counselor or administrator must attest on the form that the district gave the parent or guardian information about educational options available in the school system and the community. The bill

eliminates this school dropout option for 17-year-olds.

**COMMITTEE ACTION**

## Education Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 28 Nay 2 (03/23/2011)

## Appropriations Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 31 Nay 20 (04/26/2011)